

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-07 RSC-01

CIEP-03 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 COME-00

L-03 H-03 DRC-01 /109 W

----- 051226

R 061417Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0067

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUCHAREST 4073

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ETRD RO

SUBJ: MFN AND ROMANIA

1. NEWS THAT THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE IS ENTERING THE FINAL PHASE OF ITS MARK UP ON THE TRADE BILL PROMPTS ME TO ASK FOR A JOINT (STATE/COMMERCE/CIEP) READING ON WHAT SPECIFIC STEPS WOULD BE REQUIRED BETWEEN SIGNING OF THE BILL AND ACTUAL GRANTING OF MFN TO ROMANIA. I RECALL FOR INSTANCE DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON REGARDING A COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT AS A NECESSARY VEHICLE FOR ACCORDING MFN BUT ALSO A BELIEF THAT PRESIDENTIAL COMMITMENTS AT THE TIME TO THE USSR REQUIRED MORE RAPID ACTION ON A US/ SOVIET COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT THAN ON A US/ROMANIAN ONE.

2. US COMMITMENT TO MFN FOR ROMANIA (AUGUST 1969) OF COURSE PRECEDES THAT TO THE USSR. IN ANY CASE, IN TERMS OF OUR POLICY OF NOT TREATING EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS SUBORDINATE TO THE SOVIETS, WE NEED TO MOVE FAST ENOUGH SO AS TO BE ABLE TO GRANT MFN TO ROMANIA, IF NOT AHEAD OF THE SOVIETS AT LEAST AT THE SAME TIME. IF THIS MEANS STARTING WORK ON A COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT WE OUGHT TO DO THAT NOW.

3. WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE WASHINGTON ASSESSMENT

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BOTH OF WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE AFTER BILL IS SIGNED AND

PROPOSED TIMETABLE FOR GETTING IT DONE. TIMING IS
PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A POLICY CONSISTENT
WITH OUR EARLIER COMMITMENTS TO ROMANIA. A LAG BETWEEN
PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION AND GRANTING OF MFN STATUS TO
ROMANIA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY ROMANIANS
AND COULD SUBSTANTIALLY LESSEN THE POSITIVE EFFECT OF
OUR GRANTING MFN.
BARNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MFN, TRADE AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, FOREIGN COMMITMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BUCHAR04073
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740248-0192
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740970/aaaacgzy.tel
Line Count: 69
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MFN AND ROMANIA
TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, RO, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005